The Production-timeline of Age of Scorpius

You wanna know why the drama around Age of Scorpius is so fascinating to me? Because it could have been such a good story. You have this child prodigy, with this elaborate fantasy world that they spend years writing, they find an excited online audience and they actually get an agent that's gonna get them published but then the traditional publishing industry strikes back, their agent betrays them while their country marches face first into fascism but will our protagonist give up? No! They know that their story that they've been working on for their entire life deserves to be read and despite returning to a completely different online landscape and failing to raise a kickstarter they keep working on it, pick up a second job to raise the money, hire editors and artists and formatter Joe and it pays off because people do care about the book and preorder almost 7000 copies and now it's finally here!

This is exactly the kind of story that the online book sphere would naturally be drawn to, after years of complaints about gatekeeping in the publishing industry and lack of diversity, here comes a young, queer, neurodivergent author with a passion for writing and a best-selling debut novel.

But that is not how it went. The Age of Scorpius was a complete disaster; the book looked like a first draft, the author Milo, who has since come out as trans, first claimed to be the victim of bullying and a harassment while himself bullying and harassing other content creators, claimed that his art was just being misunderstood, doubled down, and then announced a complete rewrite and 2nd edition of the book to be released in 2026 and has also put out a poetry anthology in the meantime.

This entire drama has been talked about to death already, but I feel like I gotta add my own 2 cents as well because within this already bad situation there's also been a lot of misinformation as well and other things are blown way out of proportion and I've seen that in videos and comments and general online discussion, while a lot of other stuff got completely discarded and I just wanted to help clean the slate here, which is also why

this is probably gonna be a multiple part series. Tho, there's also gonna be a chance that I'm not gonna finish this at all because, in case you haven't paid attention to the audio-quality here, I have no idea what I'm doing, so I'm just gonna start with the one topic that's probably new information to some of you, because it's also gonna be the most important come spring.

And that is Milo's production timeline and crunch. He doesn't have a lot of experience writing professionally or producing a book, which is why he keeps pushing unrealistic deadlines. That's what happened with the first edition of Age of Scorpius and it's probably happening right now with the rewrite, too. I'm not gonna go into too much detail on the second edition right now because that's either gonna be its own video or I'm gonna talk about it when I'm gonna talk about The Zodiac Turner, Alterlife and Milo's editing philosophy. But I am gonna make a prediction right now: The second edition of AOS is probably going to be better than the first one, but it's still not gonna be the quality of a finished novel and that's because of time.

If Milo wants to release the book in spring, which means June 30th or earlier, then the new draft, which he's hopefully gonna send to editors first, would already have to be done right now in January, or otherwise he's setting himself up for a 4-month book release again, which is exactly what happened with The Age of Scorpius.

Because all of Milo's problems started on one fateful day on February 15th, 2025, when he dropped his kickstarter and announced that he'd self-publish his book with his own funds, and also decided to already announce a release date for May, just 3 ½ months later. He'd later move it to June 30th, but that was not much better either, because those are still just 4 months for editing, formatting, printing and shipping a 400-page novel. One of my best friends is an editor and when I told her about this, she started screaming. There are several parts of the production process that can take up to months on their own, but Milo was consistently so pressed for time, that even for those he only had days to do them and based on the upload dates of his TikToks I'm gonna show you how:

After his announcement, within the next four days, February 19th, Milo found a developmental editor and started self-editing the book as well as he could himself, before sending the manuscript to the editor on March 18th. He got the book back within the next 2 weeks and by April 2nd, Milo had started implementing the editor's notes. I don't know how much time exactly he took for that, but he sent the new manuscript to a copyeditor within the next weeks and got it back from them by the end of April. Now, some of you may be thinking that from April 30th to June 30th Milo would still have had two months left to edit – but June 30th is the release date, when he needs to send the book out to *you*, his readers and customers, but that means, that he needed to send the order out to the printer by May 18th. And before the book goes to the printer, it needs to be formatted. Formatter Joe had to prep this book for hardcover, paperback and e-book and he needed to integrate a lot of artwork, so that may have taken one or two weeks as well. Once Milo got the copyeditor's notes, he may only have had a week to implement them. I repeat: the book is almost 400 pages long.

Like – just so you understand how bad the crunch was – A lot of the online commentary around this book is asking why it hasn't been edited more, so people look at everything else Milo did during production and ask why he did that thing instead of editing. Why did he hire so many artists, make so many special editions and file for an LLC instead of editing, but – even if he hadn't done any of that, there still wouldn't have been any time to edit – hell – there wouldn't have been any time to *read* this book.

The result was predictable.

There's a typo on the dust-jacket!

Also another thing that I haven't seen anyone mention yet because it's not something Milo did, but one of the people he contracted [editor Joe] and that is the formatting of this book. Yes, the book is very pretty, but just look at the pages. I'm not sure if I'm using this word correctly because English isn't my first language and "Blocksatz" is the objectively better word for it but why are the pages not put in justification? Joe, this is a

professionally edited book. How does this happen? The only time I've seen anything like this is when a friend of mine got scammed in a facebook group and this is a published novel!

But the issues with his crunch weren't just that Milo didn't have time to do things properly, he also had to make really weird decisions with the order in which he did things, because in a production process, things don't just take time and need to be done in a specific order, they have to be done by a specific amount of time before release.

Case in point: If you want your book to be available for pre-orders, you should open pre-orders a couple months before release, which is exactly, what Milo did. Release was June 30th and the first order got in on April 2nd. *But* that day he was still implementing the developmental-editor's notes and hadn't sent the book to the copyeditor yet. As an author, you don't know how long exactly an editor is gonna take to come back to you and you also don't know how extensive the edits are gonna be that you need to do afterwards. By April 2nd he shouldn't even have had a release date yet, let alone opened pre-orders.

Same with the artists. If you want to publish a very artwork-heavy fantasy-novel, then you should hire enough artists to do that and you should commission them several months before release. Milo put out a call for artists on February 19th, just after he found his developmental editor. By March 22nd he had chosen around 15, for which he had to look through around 500 portfolios which he'd either have had to go through within 3 days or they would have cut into his editing time. And he started commissioning these artists pretty soon. Now, a huge junk of the artwork was chapter art for all 39 chapters. I don't know exactly when he commissioned those but let me just say that I hope that he commissioned them in April instead of March because you can't know which chapters are even going to stay in the book until you hear back from the developmental editor.

This is just to say: This production was doomed from the start and as I already said, it seems to be happening with the second edition again. His

first announcement about that was in August 2025, back then he thought he could release it end of Spring 2026. Now, if his new edition had just been a very heavy line and copyedit, meaning fixed phrasing and typos, this could have worked, but his approach was instead to do a complete chapter by chapter rewrite with the first updated chapter up on his patreon.

Any other author I would advise to just take more time, but Milo is also in a very weird legal position. As I already told you, Milo did pre-orders a lot and one of the things he did was special editions. Again, not doing it wouldn't have given him a significant amount of additional editing time because these things mostly concern art, formatting and printing, but one of the editions he sold was a limited edition paperback version which wouldn't have been released in June, but in October 25, because it would have had extra chapters. Now, of course there was the entire unpublishing and rewriting thing, so the paperbacks, which were ordered and paid, still haven't gone out. Milo has said, that those are gonna go out with the rest of the spring release and I do believe that he will send them out. I'm the one person on Youtube who doesn't believe he's a grifter, I just think he's incompetent, but that will put an extra amount of pressure on the entire production process.

Ironically, the only part here that may have gone right is the same one Milo gets made fun of for the most, which is that he founded a company. The World of Gardian LLC is mentioned the first time in his video description on May 10th, but it was formed on April 30th. This could have cut into his copyediting time, but I'll give him the benefit of the doubt and say that he maybe started talking to a business advisor or lawyer around the time where he was still waiting to hear back from his copyeditor. Now, a lot of people see this and believe that Milo thought he could set up a media-empire before the book was actually published, but this entire thing did actually make sense.

In April Milo had already sold 1500 pre-orders, which would have been over 30,000$ in one month. We never got a rundown of how many copies of which edition was sold, but at the time of his release, just his pre-orders

probably reached around 6400 books, which would have been over 130,000$. That is an amount of money where you should really start thinking about taxes, especially if he also commissioned artists for the book and handled printing and distribution himself and also had to rent an entire apartment just to store the merchandise. I’m not sure if starting a company would help with any that, but I would at least start talking to people. I’m actually kinda glad he did that rather sooner than later and according to himself the reason why he started the company was to pay his artists additional royalties on top of their commission fee, but I can’t comment on that part without further information.

But you wanna know what I can do now? Start another run of Pathologic 3 while I should be studying for exams! Bye!